

Reps. Kleefisch and Bowen: Joint statement on juvenile corrections reform

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MADISON – Upon the announcement that Governor Walker plans to close Lincoln Hills and replace it with smaller, regionally based facilities, Representatives Joel Kleefisch (R-Oconomowoc) and David Bowen (D-Milwaukee) released the following joint statement:

“It is welcome news that the governor plans to take steps that would reform Wisconsin’s juvenile corrections system in the 2019-2020 budget. While this news is indeed welcome, we believe it could be accelerated so our shared vision for safety and rehabilitation is achieved more urgently.

“Two bills, including one that we co-authored, could be passed this session that would cut the red tape of waiting for the next budget to go into effect, speeding results to children and their families, corrections workers, and taxpayers. AB 791, authored by Rep. Goyke, is very similar to the proposal laid out by the governor. And AB 794, which we authored along with Senators Bewley and Wanggaard, could work in conjunction with AB 791 by allowing judges to sentence less serious youth offenders to small, secure, residential treatment centers focused on trauma-informed care and best practices. Both of these bills could be heard and approved

by committees, passed by the legislature, and signed into law by the governor before the current legislative session is gaveled out.

“We are glad that the bipartisan work of legislators is being embraced by the governor. Now the legislature should get to work and deliver legislation to the governor that he can sign into law immediately.”